

The Labour Organiser

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Around The Local Parties

A RARE REVIEW

By J. T. BAXTER,

Assistant Administrative Officer, National Agent's Department.

(Last month we published an article under this same title. It was written by our Colleague Tom Baxter, Assistant to the National Agent, and we are glad he has consented to give readers another review of the Parties throughout the country in this issue.)

IN LAST MONTH'S ISSUE I ATTEMPTED TO SUMMARISE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN OVER 150 OF THE PARTY SURVEY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM CONSTITUENCY AND BOROUGH LABOUR PARTIES. THE EDITOR, WHO GETS ABOUT A GOOD DEAL, INFORMS ME THAT THE REVIEW ENCOURAGED OTHER PARTIES TO DIG IN THEIR HEELS. FURTHER REPORTS RECEIVED UP TO DATE SHOW THAT THE MAJORITY OF PARTIES ARE ADAPTING THEMSELVES TO NEW SITUATIONS WITH SUCCESS.

It is true that with the shock of the war a number of Parties floundered and wondered if work could continue, but to-day, after an examination of a further hundred Survey Reports received since the last issue of "The Labour Organiser," the motto of most Parties can be said to be "Business as usual."

This is not to say that Parties are not having a difficult time. The "black-out," the transference of labour, the calling-up of large bodies of men for the Armed Forces and the vast amount of overtime being worked in industrial regions, the widespread evacuation, the "key" members serving in the A.R.P., etc.—all these factors have created serious problems.

Many Parties find the major difficulty to be that of enrolling sufficient members to collect subscriptions regularly. Finance has always been our Party's problem, but the cut in social and money-raising activities has made the problem difficult. Some Parties have had their halls commandeered by the Military Authorities, and have suffered financial loss as a result. Propaganda activities have also been affected in this way.

Difficulties, however, are made to be overcome, and it is only an odd Party here and there which has given up the ghost. The resilience of 99 per cent. of Local Party Organisations has proved to be great.

Parties which panicked a little about the continued employment of their full-time agents have faced up to the problem, and few agents have had to seek other employment. In a number of cases notices have been withdrawn; in a number of others arrangements have been made for the agents to continue to act as secretary in order to keep a hand on the machine and in order that they can return to their posts as soon as circumstances allow. The number of agents adversely affected in this way does not number

more than a dozen. Many Parties report increasing strength and influence as a result of the adaptation of Party work to new conditions. In this sense the crisis has had an advantage in compelling Parties to have a thorough stock-taking and to adopt new methods.

The following will show how a number of Parties are tackling their jobs:—

COLNE VALLEY (Agent Throup) knows of no reason why Party income should not be maintained. It expects its members and affiliated organisations to meet normal obligations, and it is interesting to note that this Party has an affiliation fee of 1/- per member per year. Not a single collector of contributions has been lost to the Party since the war began. As this Party has 3,500 members, it will be realised that the Party is in a healthy position. The agent is to be congratulated!

SOUTH POPLAR (Agent Cressall) finds it impossible to run dances, but the Christmas Draw was run with success. The Loan and Thrift Society, with 2,950 shares, continues to bring in about £100 profit yearly.

WEST WALTHAMSTOW has received a reasonable response to a special financial appeal sent to Trade Union branches.

NEWPORT (Agent Ley) has a special Finance Committee, whose job it is to maximise Party resources, and they expect the income from membership fees to be nearly up to standard.

MALDON is considering special proposals to build up their General Election Fund.

NORTH HACKNEY has a special Committee to deal with finance and for the purpose of organising more effective collection of membership subscriptions. A number of collectors here are engaged on A.R.P. work, and other members are being asked to take their places as collectors.

In **MIDDLESBROUGH WEST** (Agent A. H. Cocks) older members of the Party have been recruited to take over the collecting of membership subscriptions when younger workers are not available.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES reports that six members have each volunteered to collect from twelve members, and this band of workers has promised to assist with the collection of membership subscriptions in wards which prove difficult.

In **NORTH LEEDS** collecting is now done on Sundays.

MOSS SIDE is aiming to keep in touch with members who have evacuated.

In **WEST WALTHAMSTOW** the women's section is collaborating with the collectors and Organisation Committee in the task of collecting subscriptions.

GORBALS reports the appointment of women collectors.

In **HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING** one Local Party reports an increase of membership owing to the educational work of the Party which is attracting new members.

LEEDS (Agent Williams) is proposing a City-wide Campaign as soon as weather conditions permit.

STRETFORD reports that the recent By-election has strengthened the morale of the Party and clearly defined policy differences. Special Conferences are to be held in the New Year, and the secretary is looking forward to consolidation and progress during 1940.

AYR BURGHS is giving special attention to increasing women membership.

Rumours of large membership resignations in **YORK** proved to be false, as only six members have resigned. The York Party will put this right.

BARROW (Agent Bram Longstaffe) may increase its membership owing to the influx of munition workers.

BLACKBURN (Agent Eddie) reports membership maintained, notwithstanding that a number of collectors and members are engaged on A.R.P. and munitions at Chorley. Collectors here have an adequate supply of flash-lamps provided by the Party. Wise Agent!!!

GREENOCK is having difficulties owing to the overtime problem.

KING'S NORTON is re-organising a part of the constituency, and canvassing for new members and workers is taking place under the leadership of the candidate and secretary. Members are being grouped within each ward for intensive work in their immediate districts.

In last month's issue I mentioned work done in the **ORKNEY AND ZETLAND** Division. This month we have had correspondence from the **WESTERN ISLES**, and readers can imagine how difficult it is to keep the

Party together in an area where the chief form of transport is a boat. Our correspondence from Lewis was censored, but in this dangerous area valiant efforts are being made to gather the members together once a month. This Division is represented by one of our youngest Labour M.Ps., M. K. MacMillan. Surely there is no Party with equal difficulties to that of WESTERN ISLES.

Bulletins and Bureaux

During the last month excellent examples of the issue of Party Bulletins have come to hand from Brecon and Radnor, Liverpool and Salisbury. York and Pudsey and Otley are to issue Bulletins in the near future.

Constituencies with Labour M.Ps. or prospective candidates are finding it useful to have regular visits from their M.P. or candidate. Excellent reports of this type of work come from Gorton, Lancaster, Houghton-le-Spring, Pudsey and Otley, Doncaster, etc.

Local public representatives continue to do excellent work in conjunction with Party Officers in the Information Bureaux which have been set up by the vast majority of Local Parties.

In BLACKBURN the Party offices are open every afternoon and two evenings a week, and a rota of public representatives attend. Five additional bureaux have been set up in different parts of the town.

In SOUTH POPLAR cases are dealt with at the Party office every day, and a poor man's lawyer is in attendance every Thursday.

NORTH LEEDS has two Enquiry Bureaux.

In DONCASTER town, one has been set up, and in mining areas the miners' officials act.

A bureaux has been set up under the joint auspices of the Labour and Co-operative Parties in YORK.

Local Parties in HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING are co-operating with the bureaux opened by the National Council of Social Services. This is deemed desirable since the bureaux handle various forms of charity.

In SOUTH WALES and LANCA-SHIRE, in particular, the Council of Social Services bureaux only operate when Labour Parties and Trade Union bureaux do not exist. In other parts of the country, too, the National

Council of Social Service refrain from doing the work when Labour Parties do the job effectively.

Two Party bureaux have been set up in GORTON, and are manned by a rota of public representatives.

Many Parties report the setting up of Training Classes for officers, so that when present officers are called away others are ready to take their places. This type of training scheme is specially reported upon by NORTH HAMMERSMITH and RHONDDA EAST.

SHEFFIELD [PARK] report that a good number of offices are now filled by women members.

Propaganda and Meetings

MIDDLESBROUGH WEST is starting a campaign to enrol more active women workers.

Normal Party propaganda has not been easy to conduct, but YARDLEY has re-started its Labour Church, and many constituencies in the North-East area are holding propaganda meetings on a Sunday evening.

The Regional Conferences on Labour's Peace Policy have shown the way to effective Party propaganda. In MIDDLESBROUGH WEST councillors address Sunday evening meetings, and give valuable information concerning Local Government work.

In addition to Party Management Committee Meetings, Aggregate Members' Meetings are being held, and a good number of Parties report the starting of Discussion Circles and Lectures.

In CHESTERFIELD, halls are not available, but five Local Parties are meeting regularly, having talks on Socialist problems. A weekly N.C.L.C. Class is held on Sundays, and this is attracting more persons than the room can hold. Many other Parties report co-operation with the N.C.L.C. or the W.E.A.

NORTH SALFORD is holding meetings in private houses, and the meetings are more frequent and better attended than before the war. Sixty per cent. of attendances are reported at Party meetings.

BIRKENHEAD reports a successful Women's Conference—the first held in Birkenhead for seven years—and a Conference for Trade Unionists has been arranged to take place early in the New Year.

Ward meetings are attended up to

the average in BLACKBURN. Vital and well-attended General Management Committee meetings are reported from NORTH HACKNEY, SOUTH CROYDON, LANCASTER, GORTON, NORTH SALFORD, HARTLEPOOLS and WEST FIFE.

New Propaganda Committees have been appointed in SOUTH CROYDON and NORTHAMPTON.

BRISTOL BOROUGH reports that the Emergency Committees set up at the beginning of the war have been found to be unnecessary, and that normal Party working has now been adopted. Social activities as a means of keeping the membership together, and of raising finance, are gradually coming back into their own.

In YARDLEY, dances and socials are run regularly. A small committee organises whist drives on two evenings and one afternoon every week, and a Christmas Draw in this Division has proved a great success.

Some Parties are taking effective action to keep in contact with members who have joined H.M. Forces or moved from their constituencies for other reasons.

HARTLEPOOLS sends a monthly greeting to all its members in the Forces, and sent a small parcel to each of them at Christmas. [Doncaster also has sent a seasonable greetings card to members serving in the Forces, also to their families at home.—Ed., "L.O."]

PRESTON has established a "Comforts Fund," and regularly sends parcels.

WALTHAMSTOW has a "Conscripts' Welfare Committee," whose job it is to keep in contact with those who are called up. This Committee collects the names and donations for this special work.

SOUTHAMPTON shows us how to retain and inspire active workers, and one example of this is referred to in the article written by Colleague J. W. Kneeshaw in this issue.

"Business as usual" is not too bad a motto in these difficult times, but "Better than usual" is what a good number of Parties are now able to report. Let this be widespread.

THE KREMLIN CRAWL

(With apologies to the Lambeth Walk)

By JACK CUTTER

If you go down King Street way
Any evening—any day
You'll find them all
Doing the Kremlin Crawl.
Where they're going, they don't know;
It all depends on Uncle Joe.
That's why they're all
Doing the Kremlin Crawl.
Sometimes they're rather queasy,
Dubious and uneasy,
Waiting for Joe to say where,
"Whoa, there! Stay there."
Here's a line from Molotov:
"Your instructions, with my love.
Let's see you all
Doing the Kremlin Crawl."

The "Daily Worker's" in a maze.
The leader writer sadly says:
"Don't like it at all—
Doing the Kremlin Crawl.
Seems Sir Oswald's now our chum;
Comrade Hitler, too, by gum!
Boost up his Western wall
Doing the Kremlin Crawl.
Shouting a loud "Eureka!"
Waving a big swastika;
Let's put the hammer and sickle
Safely—in pickle.
Shout Heil Hitler, blast his eyes.
Get set for the next surprise.
It'll find us all
Doing the Kremlin Crawl.

OUR INVALIDS

We regret to learn of the serious illness of Mr. W. F. Coles, agent at Wednesbury. We send our best wishes for recovery.

Mr. Claud Denscombe, of Reading, has also recently been ill. He has got back to work. The order is: go slow—a difficult job for our comrade at all times; he has recently made a wonderful contribution to the Party's recovery in Reading.



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THIS

IT'S YOUR PROBLEM

EVACUATION BUSINESS

Membership Cards for 1940 are now going out and D.L.P.s are mostly in the throes of their annual membership stock-taking and allocation of cards to Party units.

How is evacuation and other movements of population going to affect this year's Party membership total?

Let us get clear right away that this question is one of the biggest of many problems facing the Party to-day. Let us lose membership and we lose strength. If the Party's stiffening among the electorate suffers, the Party goes back—and this at a time when every ounce of effort is needed to make Labour's Peace Aims and Labour's alternative Government a security and a surety at the next election (which will come, anyway, when the war is over and when the Government wants it).

Theoretically, evacuation should not affect Party membership. Our good folk should just report to the Local Parties in their new areas and our Local Parties should be there to meet them, greet them, or find them, and all is well.

Unfortunately these things just don't always happen. We stand to lose because of the laxity and the pre-occupation of members, and the problem is so pressing that a clear call to every Party is needed to see that the matter is handled rightly and without delay.

This article is not so much for those in evacuation areas, though be it said that in many such areas evacuation of women and children has been largely counter-balanced by influxes of adult workers. Can these be reached by canvasses and publicity methods and brought with'n the fold?

Coupled with the evacuation problem is that of "losses" due to enlistment. The effect on membership registers is great. The first evacuation found Local Parties unready for the position; they have kept touch better with enlisted men and their families, but the question might yet be asked what special means we have devised to

deal with evacuation problems, enlistments and the shifts of population.

The Labour Party provides machinery and removal forms. But the great task is first catch your hare; and if the hare has escaped to the country he is hard to catch.

To-day there exist two great avenues or opportunities for re-catching our own "hares" and of catching others. The one method is by canvassing and the other is through the Unions.

We profoundly believe that a great membership campaign in February is this year necessary and advisable in all areas. We suggest no new method—it's the old ones that will tell again—pre-distribution of literature, house-to-house visits with literature to sell, membership application forms and cards, plus publicity and plus publicity again.

With "Labour's Peace Aims" to sell, nobody need be afraid of electors telling us that the call is ill-timed. The answer is that we are looking for our own people, and at the same time holding out hope and reason and understanding to a sorely bewildered nation. Our canvassers go forth, too, as the representatives of *the only alternative Government*. Comrades, let us canvass, and canvass hard while there's time (and profit!).

Supplementary to our canvasses there are other ways of seeking those who are lost and of finding new folk. Advertised functions for Party sympathisers will help; so will our Advice Bureaux; our meetings (where possible); our advertised educational facilities; our continued contacts with absent members and their families, etc. And last, but not least, our advertised Party address — how *can* evacuees report or sympathisers join if nobody knows where to find us?

To-day's problems are new ones. But they bring home this lesson: that the industrial and political aims of Labour are more than ever dependent upon each other.

Has it occurred to you that heaps of Labour folk among "transferred

labour" will, on entering their new employment, make contact with their T.U. because they find the Trade Union in the factory, and because so often continued T.U. membership is economically necessary and loss of it may mean financial and beneficial loss?

Well, if our pal finds the hare he surely won't skin it. His finding is, or should be, a simplification for us.

Suitable letters or circulars to T.U. branches naming the Party Headquarters and inviting old members to report are worth while where local circumstances may justify this method. As we have stressed before, and again elsewhere in this issue, close contact with the Trade Unions and their officers is more than ever desirable during the war. Here is a case where direct benefit might result.

One of the difficulties about evacuees is that often there is a disposition to look back and to hesitate about making new connections. This is an opportunity for tact, remembering that transferred membership is secondary to transferred interest and the joy and interest of Party. If the last comes first, be sure the other will follow.

Lastly, in this new push to retain and strengthen our own, let us be sure whom we bring in. The Labour umbrella is not big enough for those who disbelieve in our Party and want to come in only for disruption. Keep these out, friends, if your Party would grow and be strong. The country teems with genuine Labour Party sympathy. Let us harness that and that alone.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE

We thank the editors of the following journals for their December copies duly received:—

The Pioneer (Woolwich).
London News.
Bradford Citizen.
Forward (Ipswich).
Bermondsey Labour Magazine.
Rochdale Labour News.
Cannock Chase Gazette.
Preston Labour News.
Reading Citizen.
Warrington Labour News (weekly).
Birmingham Town Crier (weekly).
Leeds Weekly Citizen.
The Clarion (November)—Bristol
Central D.L.P.

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(45 hours)

Have You Got Your Diary ?

We are now in mid-January, and there must be many Labour workers who have not yet possessed themselves of the Labour Party Diary for 1940. Local Parties who have not ordered are losing a chance of a little welcome profit, and they are losing for their members a really worth-while purchase.

The possession of a diary, although common enough habit amongst speakers, organisers and such-like, is not an everyman's habit. Why not try to make it so, because a diary can be used for all sorts of helpful purposes, dates of Party meetings and functions—even to jot down birthdays, battles and, shall we say it, the date of Peace?

Anyway, who does not need a calendar, not to mention the heaps of information contained in this little pocket possession?

MORE CANDIDATES

N.E.C. Endorsements, 20th December, 1939

DORSET: East.—Mr. W. Fletcher Cooke,
1 Harcourt Buildings, Temple,
London, E.C.

LANCS.: Stretford. — Mrs. Frances
Kerby, S. Augustine's Vicarage,
Pendlebury, Lancs.

STAFFS.: Smethwick.—Councillor A. J.
Dobbs, 6 Barden Grove, Whingate,
Leeds, Yorks.

SUFFOLK: Lowestoft. — Rev. A. D.
Belden, 19 Elms Road, Harrow
Weald, Middx.

WORCS.: Stourbridge.—Mr. A. Moyle,
29 Heathside Avenue, Bexley Heath,
Kent.

Candidatures Withdrawn

BEDS.: Mid.—Mr. G. L. Matthews.

BERKS.: Windsor. — Mr Norman
Bartlett.

SOM.: Bath.—Mr. G. G. Desmond.

SUFFOLK: Eye.—Mr. H. Self.

YOUTH

We welcome the publication early this month of "The Socialist," the new official organ of the Labour Party League of Youth.

The paper, which is a crown folio fly, is well set out and with varied contents. Clem Attlee, Mrs. Gould and Professor Laski are the heavy guns in the first issue, but as the paper develops we shall hope to see youth itself spreading itself in its columns and leading us truly to the goal expressed in this paper's title.

"The Socialist" is supplied to League branches at 6d. per dozen copies; otherwise the price is one penny.

The Labour Party News Bulletin

One of the most useful services by the Party since the war has been the publication of the "News Bulletin" at a price which enables an effective distribution to be made at a low cost.

Previous issues of the "Bulletin" have been sold out, and naturally so. It would considerably help future publications if parties would place their orders for the "Bulletin" for a definite quantity and for a definite period ahead. The price for various quantities has been circulated to all parties.

"Labour's Peace Aims"

"Labour's Peace Aims" continues to have a phenomenal sale, four reprints having become necessary already.

Woolwich Labour Party distributed 20,000 copies; five thousand have also gone to East Hull and a similar quantity to Reading. The Royal Arsenal Co-op. Society has ordered ten thousand for distribution to their guilds, and a number of Trade Unions have ordered sufficient supplies for copies to be sent to all their branches.

The sale booms, and local secretaries should be alive to their opportunities. The price of a hundred copies is 6/-, and of a thousand copies £2 15s. Parties ordering a thousand or more may have their copies over-printed with suitable matter without charge.

The sale and distribution of the Peace Aims is one thing, but the conversion of the electorate requires even more. Labour's rank and file should thoroughly understand them and be competent to defend and spread them.

An exceptional aid to the study of "Labour's Peace Aims" is a lecture commentary which has been prepared by Mr. Harold Croft as a basis for discussion. Mr. Croft is to take charge of the preparatory and administrative work in connection with this new phase of Party effort, and we have no doubt of the effective service which will be accorded and the help which students and Party workers will receive by this means.

We understand that a detailed scheme for the closer study of Party policy in both International and National Affairs is in course of preparation.



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Some Notes By The Way

The paper shortage we predicted in our first War Number is with us. Once again we urge secretaries to begin economising. You will not be able to repeat your stationery orders at the old price. It is surprising to find that few of Labour's local papers (where they continue to publish) have been reduced in size. This won't last.

With almost every other commodity rising in price, *and wages, too*, the question arises how long 1d. a week will suffice local needs. The fact is that it hardly does so now, even with big membership Parties. We venture to say that 2d. or even 3d. per member wouldn't prove too much. Which Party will be the first to get it? We believe that there is no shame, and every reason for, in putting our financial problems frankly before the rank and file. And we have faith that the best of our people would be ready to help.

In another article our esteemed contributor, Mr. J. T. Baxter, mentions a Party with a T.U. affiliation fee of 1/- per annum, and they get it. And why not? Another of the suggestions in our first War Number was that the Trade Unions were in for a period of prosperity and that now was the time to get a really economic affiliation fee. Events are proving us right. Will local comrades have the courage to tackle this problem? Why on earth should Labour allow its industrial arm to swell with riches and condemn its political Party to impoverishment? Is it because we have been afraid to raise the issue?

Resolutions—how they breed. But not the nice New Year ones to conquer difficulties, to spread our gospel and extend our membership; but the crazy critical ones. Oh, yes, criticism is all right; good for us, you know—a thing we learnt but never understood in infancy. But is there *never* a close time for criticism? And are the critics *never* out of season? Talking of resolutions, has any reader ever thought to read back the minutes and see what his Party has actually committed itself to? A damning indict-

ment for inconsistency could be laid against some Parties on the evidence thus obtained. That won't matter much to our Party's army of chronic critics. But is it not time the professional critic was put in his place in our Party; better still, put to *work*?

Some years ago a number of Parties experimented with paid membership canvassers, notably, we believe, Bristol East. Several Parties secured good memberships by these means. The suggestion was recently made to us that the considerable movements of population since the war might justify the same means again in quite a lot of constituencies. The snag, of course, is that the right type of person is rare and is not likely in any case to be out of work. But there certainly is a large new uncanvassed population in many areas. It is up to the Parties in those places.

A brainy duplicated sheet entitled "What's On," sent us by the East Walthamstow Labour Party, indicates that original and intensive work is being carried on in this constituency. "What's On" is worth seeing, but if you want to see it we advise sending a three-halfpenny stamp to the Secretary, 342, Hoe Street, Walthamstow, London, E.17.

We gather from the Middlesex Labour Press Service—a useful couple of sheets published by the Middlesex Federation of Labour Parties—that a recent questionnaire by the Federation discloses a healthy state of being as shown by the replies from local Parties received. Some Parties report a little drift to the C.P.; the confusion caused thereby has, however, been overcome, and the Labour Parties have been healthier as a result. It would appear also from this Press Service that a number of local Parties whom we have not noted are publishing bulletins: among them Finchley, Heston and Isleworth, North Tottenham and Southgate. Soon there will be few Parties which have not developed this line of activity.

HOW THEY DO IT IN SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton has to depend almost entirely on members' weekly subscriptions for its income. They maintain a membership of round about 3,000. To obtain these subscriptions, an average of 1,600 calls per week are made by a team of 143 collectors. They receive neither payment, commission, nor reward of any kind. Five of them have done this job faithfully every week for thirteen years; ten of them for seven years; and 35 of them for over four years.

With the black-out, which in Southampton is stygian, there was some anxiety as to how this test would be met. It is being met manfully—and womanfully. And why?

Southampton has succeeded in giving that imponderable, but supremely important quality, "status," to all its officers.

No secretary or collector is allowed to feel that his or her work is unimportant, or that nobody cares, which is a common and fatal condition in so many organisations.

Annually, an event, unique in my not inconsiderable experience, is held to affirm the rank of all these officers and to render to them the Party's warm and sincere gratitude.

I was the privileged guest at this event on December 7th. Southampton's

Socialist veteran, Alderman Lewis, one of the two Parliamentary candidates for the Borough, was our host, and the master-hand of Mr. Rose, the agent, had completed the arrangements.

There is nothing makeshift about this event. It was held in a fine, well-lighted hall, with a perfect dancing floor, about which were placed tables, alfresco, as daintily and amply set and served as at any Lord Mayor's At Home. This was highly creditable to the Co-operative Society, which did the catering. There were two bands, one for symphonic, and the other for jazz music, and the W.E.A. Players presented a play. And there were speeches, of marked brevity.

It was a great thanksgiving to comrades who are rendering the usually unapplauded services by which the Party lives and thrives. It was also "a feast of fellowship and flow of soul," which are the very well-spring of healthy Party life.

J. W. KNEESHAW.

CORRECTION

On page 181 of our last issue (Serial No. 220) we gave a list of the Constituency Parties which had already achieved one individual member to every eight Labour voters. North Dorset was stated to have had 13,360 Labour voters in 1935. This figure should have read 1,360.

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LABOUR PARTY DIRECTORY

List of D.L.P. Alterations

<i>Index No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Name of Organisation</i>	<i>Present Secretary and Address</i>
B16	SB	Wallasey T.C. & L.P.	Mrs. E. COCHRANE, "Newlyn," Childwall Avenue, Moreton, Wirral.
B17	CD	Altrincham D.L.P.	Mr. C. MAPP, 12, Campbell Road, Sale, Cheshire.
B25	CD	Wirral D.L.P.	Mr. H. A. LEWIS, 25, Inglewood Avenue, Moreton, Wirral, Cheshire.
A62	SB	Hartlepool D.L.P.	Mr. J. C. PROUD, 47, Bright Street, West Hartlepool, Co. Durham.
A66	CD	Barnard Castle D.L.P.	Mr. J. ROBERTSHAW, 34, Finings Avenue, Langley Park, Co. Durham.
G80/81	DB	Leyton T.C. & L.P.	Ald. J. FITZGERALD, 12, Salisbury Road, London, E.10.
G88	BD	Upton D.L.P.	Mr. A. W. JACK, 14, Vicarage Road, Stratford, London, E.15.
G92	CD	Harwich D.L.P.	Mr. S. C. TYLER, 73, Shaftesbury Avenue, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex.
G94	CD	Romford D.L.P.	Mrs. HESELTINE, 75, Riversdale Road, Romford, Essex.
D111	BD	Portsmouth South D.L.P.	Mrs. M. M. DURMAN, 35, Baileys Road, Southsea, Hants.
D131	BD	Chatham D.L.P.	Coun. F. HOLLANDS, 83, Palmerston Road, Chatham, Kent.
D141	CD	Maidstone D.L.P.	Mr. J. BEVAN, 51, Mote Road, Maidstone, Kent.
B171	BD	Hulme D.L.P.	Mr. T. RIGBY, 16, Yew Street, Hulme, Manchester, 15.
B179	SB	Rochdale T.C. & L.P.	Mr. T. LANCASHIRE, Cloth Hall, College Street, Rochdale, Lancs.
B185	SB	Southport T.C. & L.P.	Mr. J. TAYLOR, 12, Beaconsfield Road, Southport, Lancs.
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E224/5	DB	Bermondsey D.L.P. & T.C.	Mr. F. C. HICKMAN, Labour Institute, 60B, Fort Road, London, S.E.1.
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D288	BD	Willesden East D.L.P.	Mr. A. G. RAINBIRD, 25, Victoria Road, London, N.W.6.
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G304	CD	Norfolk North D.L.P.	Mr. W. C. FULCHER, 47, Bernard Road, Cromer, Norfolk.
A315	BD	Newcastle North D.L.P.	Mr. B. W. H. ELSWORTH, 22, Simpson Street, Sandyford, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2.
D333	CD	South Oxfordshire D.L.P.	Mrs. M. A. HOARE, 15, Rymers Lane, Cowley, Oxford.
C360	CD	Leek D.L.P.	Mr. L. JACKSON, 59, Chell Heath, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent.

G369 CD	Sudbury	Mrs. GARRETT, The Steps, Boxford, Colchester, Essex.
D372 SB	Kingston-on-Thames D.L.P.	Mr. G. H. LOMAN, 353, Ewell Road, Tolworth, Surrey.
C390 BD	Aston D.L.P.	Mr. F. MOODY, Ruskin Hall, Victoria Road, Aston, Birmingham.
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H483 CD	Wrexham T.C. & L.P.	Coun. S. EDWARDS, 20, Saxon Street, Wrexham, Denbighs.
J517 CD	North Ayr & Bute D.L.P.	Mr. J. WHITEFORD, 18, Bank Street, Kilbirnie, Ayr.
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J573 SB	Paisley T.C. & L.P.	Miss S. C. GOUDIE, 112, Hawkhead Road, Paisley, Renfrewshire.

ANSWERS IN BRIEF

A.P.—The "Labour Organiser" is not a medium through which we can allow the discussion of differences on Party policy. We ourselves may sometimes differ from the majority view on sundry matters, but the paper exists to further the organisation of the Party and only in so far as we conceive organisation to be interested is controversy in our pages permitted. The central aim of our Party's progress and its ultimate triumph is common, we hope, to all sections of the Party; and all sections can read the "Labour Organiser" and find, we trust, help and guidance and the comradeship that means so much in a common cause.

E.C.M.—It was not expected that the Local Elections Act was going to work out in an ideal manner. Where injustice is done in the filling of local vacancies it is desirable that the fullest information should be given to Party Headquarters. Data on this matter may be needed later.

Mrs. T.—Have you not seen the Party leaflet "Rents in War-time"? It is precisely what you need for distribution in your area.

C.F.—As a new literature secretary you should notify your appointment to Maurice Hackett at the Head Office.

Attention was recently drawn to the fact that Head Office has not been notified of many changes in literature secretaryships which have taken place since the war.

D.L.—There is no reason whatever for suspending the election of new officers this January. Indeed annual meetings should on this occasion be made more of. It is worth going to some trouble and expense to get good results. A spirit of comradeship and willingness develops out of apparent success, and it becomes easier to fill all the offices with suitable workers. Make your annual meeting this time a really red letter day.

C.O.—Yours is the only legal question which has reached us since last month, which indicates that our Parties are concentrating rather upon realities of present-day organisation than the abstrusities of election law. However, to answer you, the Public Meetings Act, 1908, which first laid down penalties for disorder at public meetings must now be read in conjunction with the Public Order Act, 1936, because a new sub-section has been added to the original Act, the effect of which is to give power to the police to secure the name and address of an interrupter on request to do so by the chairman of the meeting.

LIMELIGHT ON LIFE

Middle-class Women

We have been reading an article by C. E. M. Joad entitled "Discontented women are dangerous," written, not in some portentous scientific publication, but in that somewhat delectable little paper "Lilliput."

Joad's theme is, that since their enfranchisement, women have had a raw deal, particularly the middle-class women, he apparently knows best. No place in industry, scant welcome elsewhere, time on her hands and labour- and time-saving devices in the home to add to the ennui—all this he says is making women (middle-class women that is) desperate.

We read, for instance, that "middle-class women, the wives and daughters of the new suburbs, suffer from an overplus of leisure, leisure made restless by unused faculties and unexpended energies. . .lonely, unsatisfied, they are removed from the traditional life of the past: yet have no share in the social opportunities of the present. . .many women are absolutely desperate; their symptoms will break out in some totalitarian form unless some way is found for them to use their energies."

And again "the average modern suburban woman has no religion. . . its place is apt to be filled by some human figure, complete with raincoat, moustache and straying lock of hair to serve as a focusing point—an outlet for the surplus fund of unexpended seriousness from which so many women are suffering." Then Joad gives us from Douglas Reed's "Insanity Fair" the following: "When Hitler came to power, women worshipped him as a god. . .I saw women crowding round him in hundreds trying to kiss his hand, touch his garment, weeping from a surfeit of bliss at being in his presence."

And (conclusion) "if we in this country are ever so foolish as to give a English Hitler his opportunity, it will be through the help of the unoccupied women of the suburbs, seeking an outlet for untapped emotions and unused energies."

Now all the above which some readers may be disposed to dismiss as piffle we can, if we incline, brush aside with a merry joke as to the unlimited scope there exists for a modern Don Juan—or a host of such.

But we *don't* incline; let's be serious. All who work for Socialist victory are concerned with what women are doing, or not doing, or with what any big section of women is doing, or not doing.

Joad reminds us that God gets the women whom men don't want. They comprise the congregations, though we opine that the Primrose League, and the Women's Conservative Associations get their whack.

Now this, after all, is cheering. For does it not appear that middle-class women (less the unlovely lot mentioned) are, even if at a loose end, not being attracted to Tory politics? We think Joad is right; a great mass of womanhood, spritely, brainy, not too old, not too young, with leisure, ability and adaptability, are wasting and waiting for an appeal or a Cause that they can espouse, work for and live for. And we ask "has Socialism no appeal to middle-class women?" No *quod erat demonstrandum* to find in able educated minds? No satisfaction in service to offer to those leading void and seemingly purposeless lives? No Ideal for the idle and soothing for the aching?

Or, have we Socialists in our scorn passed by an opportunity, and in our lack of understanding failed just where our political enemies have obviously failed also?

Quite recently we have noticed that in all the best suburbs War Service has got hold of the women. Aids and services of all kinds seem to be succeeding best here. Has the war found a temporary cure for middle-class boredom? We venture that this has more to do with the matter than patriotism or hate of Hitler.

We refuse to believe that middle-class women cannot be brought over to Social Democracy. But what

special means have we devised or can devise? We have often noted the ability and tireless energy of some of these people in normal Party working, although often we have conceived them to be feeling out of their element—the loneliness and the frustration penetrated here, too.

Of course we cannot stratify the Labour Party to provide for any social class. Duke's daughter or cook's daughter come in on equal terms—though that implies a better welcome than middle-class women sometimes get. But we can, and ought, to stratify our appeals, our propaganda and our efforts to win that class which is aching for adventure, and who, withal, are but the wives and daughters of *workers* no Socialist state could do without!

Have *you*, dear reader, any suggestions how to cater; have *you* the key to golden opportunity? We await an answer from some of our readers, and we shall return to the subject again.

* * *

In the above article we present our readers with a problem; we invite suggestions, and the best suggestion will receive a suitable and useful reward.

We have many times stressed in the "L.O." that political organisation and the means to political growth are not stereotyped. Problems change, the people themselves change, the kaleidoscope of life presents new prospects and invites new methods as time goes on.

And there are war conditions to-day and new habits of life which demand from political organisers fresh enterprise and initiative and which constitute a challenge to their originality. The Party must live, but in new conditions. Our job is first, to understand, and then conquer those conditions.

Let us mention a few recent changes and tendencies. These will provide food for future articles and ideas for our organisers on which to try their wits in bringing the circumstances into harmony with their endeavours for their Parties. Here is a list of problems arriving out of changes everyone of which has its reaction on our methods and on our organisation:

1. Evacuation and de-evacuation.
2. Longer factory hours, staggered knocking-off times, earlier pay-days.

3. Absorption of women in industry.
4. Growth in members and influence of Trade Unions.
5. The drift from football (4,000 crowds instead of 30,000's).
6. Increased home life due to black-out (does this call for more "magazine" pages in local journals?)
7. Changes in the "unemployed" problem.
8. Distribution of children to small families or childless homes in safe areas.
9. Limitations on travel.
10. The war call on Youth.
11. The effect of inflation.
12. Absence of contested elections.

No, readers, this list is *not* exhaustive. But it indicates where our thoughts will stray in future issues, for fresh problems are now being met, understood and tackled by almost every Party. We invite suggestions on any of these matters.

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EASY TERMS

The "Rugby Citizen" for January, 1940, greatly improved as to contents and get-up, reaches us as we go to press. We are glad to notice that a women's column is now included. This is done well. Other features and the advertisements betoken progress.

AN APPEAL

We appeal to our readers to deal with "L.O." advertisers. It helps us. It helps them and, believe us, it helps you too!

What is London?

By J. W. Kneeshaw

Your reference to London in the November-December issue of the L.O. projects into its pages one of the most urgent problems in Party Organisation and Local Government.

What is London? It was once a small trading centre confined within a Roman wall, erected after a blitzkrieg successfully conducted by a lady named Boadicea.

It refused to be confined within a wall, however, and its unceasing growth has always outpaced its government. The Great Plague and the Great Fire were amongst the consequences, as was also the fatal refusal to rebuild the city to the plans of Sir Christopher Wren. Its growth still outpaces its government.

The London of the L.C.C. is not London. It is not even a half of it. It is merely that part of it which lies within boundaries fixed in 1855. Certain minor changes have since been made, but according to the L.C.C. Year Book of 1938, "Those changes . . . have resulted in reductions rather than in increases in the area."

Had the London population remained stationary since 1855, all might have been well, but the fact is that by far the greatest trek in the history of mankind has terminated here. According to the L.C.C. Year Book, the population within the L.C.C. area in 1855 was about 2,500,000 and that of outer London districts about 350,000. In 1936, however, the estimated population of Greater London *outside the County* was 4,434,600, compared with an estimated L.C.C. population of 4,141,100.

Whilst the interests of both these vast populations are identical, and for all living purposes they are one unit, the paper boundary made nearly a century ago, places them asunder. Of this the L.C.C. Year Book says "the boundary of the County is not in any way a natural one, passing as it does through thickly populated districts, with the streets and houses continuing without any break."

Whilst for organisational purposes the restricted L.C.C. area possesses one Party unit, the vast extensions of London beyond the County boundary have no organisational connection with London.

That part of it which lies in the County of Essex, and which includes East Ham, West Ham, Ilford, Romford, etc., is for organisational purposes attached to Grantham and Grimsby, whilst all the remainder, spreading over five other counties, is attached to Bedford, Bournemouth and Dover.

Failure to adapt Party organisation and Local Government to the needs of these vast expansions of population has imposed upon Outer London probably the most chaotic litter of small-scale governing authorities in the world.

The commercial interests in transport, water and electricity supplies have seen to it that the boundaries of their businesses have expanded with the population, but Party organisation and Local Government are still marking time with conditions fixed in 1855!

LABOUR'S BOOK SERVICE

The Labour Book Service, the successful progress of which was interrupted by the outbreak of war, has now been re-started with the full support of the T.U.C. and the Labour Party.

We have received an advance leaflet explanatory of the Book Service, showing how, for less than a penny a day, one can build up a comprehensive library at home. The list of forthcoming books promises well, and it is to be hoped that the Labour Book Service will play a full part in the life of local Labour Parties. Our educational activities must be more and more developed; indeed, the war gives opportunities for this, while it is something not common in these times to be able to buy anything at one-third the customary price!

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WOOLWICH ENTERPRISE

A BIT OF HISTORY

The Woolwich Labour Party, foremost always in enterprise, faith and courage, send us two items of news this month.

This Party purchased 20,000 copies of "Labour's Peace Aims" and distributed them house-to-house over a week-end. These copies were over-printed with the words: "With the compliments of the Woolwich Labour Party," and the back of the title-page was utilised for a membership application form. Not every Party can order 20,000 copies, but they should order according to their means and thus emulate this fine example.

The next item concerns the publication, at present quarterly, of a little paper entitled "The Pioneer." Since

"The Citizen" suspended publication a little while ago Woolwich has been without a paper, but, as the editor says, "Woolwich cannot be without its Labour paper"; hence the present publication to keep in touch with the Party's 5,000 members.

We quote the following "bit of history" from the current issue of "The Pioneer":

A BIT OF HISTORY.

"This first issue of the new *Pioneer* is a reminder that for over forty years Woolwich has been a pioneer in publishing Labour papers. The first "Woolwich and District Labour Notes" was published by the Woolwich I.L.P. in 1898, and some dozen monthly issues

were published. In 1900 a Joint Committee of the I.L.P. and Woolwich Trades Council revived it under the title of "Woolwich Labour Journal," and it was sold at one half-penny. Only a few issues were published.

In 1901 a more successful venture was launched by the Trade Council, and from the first issue of the "Borough of Woolwich Labour Journal" in October, 1901, to the present day, there has been continuous publication of a Labour paper in some form or other. The "Labour Journal" was incorporated in the weekly *Pioneer*, the first issue of which was published on October 14th, 1904.

The Pioneer! What memories it evokes among older members of the Party. Launched in the enthusiasm of youth, fostered with loving care by hundreds of enthusiastic stalwarts, the *Pioneer* for eighteen years was a rally-

ing centre for all Party activities. The weekly *Pioneer* ceased publication in 1922—it never recovered from the terrific increased costs during the Great War, 1914-18—and was followed by the monthly *Pioneer*, and then the *Citizen* issued in co-operation with the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society.

For the moment the *Citizen* has suspended publication. So back to *The Pioneer*. Woolwich cannot be without its Labour paper. The present intention is to issue *The Pioneer* quarterly, to keep contact with our membership. But who knows? Woolwich Labour published a Labour paper during the Boer War, the Great War, and has made a start with this new *Pioneer* in this war. True! It is a modest venture compared with the old weekly *Pioneer* and the *Citizen*. But we repeat—who knows? The reply is with our members."

TRY THIS AS A MEMBERSHIP GETTER

The following, which we cull from the Bristol Central "Clarion," is well worth using in a membership campaign and for use by collectors generally. If people only *knew* what membership collectors do, and why they do it, there would be more for the collectors to do and yet more to help them do it.

MAY I CALL ON YOU?

"Have you ever thought what it costs to run the Labour Party? Rent to be paid when meetings are held, leaflets and literature bought, elections fought, and a host of other expenses. It is a good thing that we have so many members who give their services voluntarily, otherwise we couldn't do the good work that we are doing. Our opponent's difficulty, on the other hand, is not lack of money, but that they can't get the enthusiastic and voluntary workers that we can. Money rolls into their funds by the hundreds and thousands of pounds. Money comes into our funds in pennies. I am a collector, and I give up some of my time each week to collect the penny member-

ship subscriptions from our members. Out of this we have to keep an organisation to represent your point of view and fight your battle for you in the Council Chamber, at the Houses of Parliament, and by propaganda. When one looks back upon the achievements of the Labour Party, both in Opposition and in Government, no one will begrudge what they have given in the past.

When one visualises the work which the Labour Party must and is going to do in the future, then surely one penny a week is worth finding with a glad heart. Our task, calling from house to house, is not an easy one, although the little chat upon the doorstep is very refreshing. If you are already a subscriber, think of this and pay up with a smile.

If you are not yet a subscriber, may I have the pleasure of enrolling you as one? Fill in the application form below, and send it to your Ward or the Divisional Secretary. I shall be very pleased to call upon you and add you to my list of many friends."

"PENNY COLLECTOR."